

# Case Study

## Rhonda & Ketut: a marketing love story



Inside the strategy, execution and extraordinary results. An extended and updated campaign post-analysis on the AAMI campaigns that captured Australia's heart and mind.



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# Australia's favourite insurance love story

**Campaign:**  
Rhonda & Ketut series  
**Client:** AAMI  
**Agency:** Badjar Ogilvy

## BACKGROUND

The motor insurance market in Australia is mature, highly competitive and its growth has plateaued. Nowadays the only real way to grow is to steal customers from competitors. And therein lies the challenge. Customers come into the market 52 weeks of the year, so there is a constant challenge for brands to ensure they're top of mind when the time comes for consumers to enquire about a policy.

However, insurance is a commoditised market and, according to consumers, there is very little differentiation between insurers, which leads to lethargy when it comes to deciding whether to stay or change. Brands have constantly tried to differentiate themselves or be noticed, but they are mostly still overlooked.

So if people won't take notice of brands, how do they distinguish themselves and stand out from the crowd? And how can AAMI get people to switch from their existing insurer to grow its brand?





### OBJECTIVES

A market-leading brand such as AAMI still requires business growth to meet corporate objectives, irrespective of the fact there is little market growth, consumer inertia and a perceived lack of brand differentiation.

The business objectives required that the campaign increase opportunity calls. That is, new policy quotes, which is the key metric in which the advertising is judged. In other words, we had to drive potential customers to the phones or the website to get an insurance quote.

### STRATEGY

The overarching strategy behind this campaign was to give the AAMI Insurance brand a personality, something that Australians are entertained by, relate to and can engage with and remember for 52 weeks of the year.

The strategy was built on the following insights.

#### The consumer insight

Most insurance customers in Australia rarely get anything from their insurer. They pay their premiums in the hope that they'll never have to make a claim. In the event they do, their insurer provides a service that ensures they get back on the road as quickly and pain free as possible. But what about those customers that don't make a claim? They have safer driving records and cost their insurer less money, so shouldn't be paying the same premiums as those who do claim.

#### The brand insight

AAMI had recognised those customers that don't make claims and had developed the Safe Driver Rewards product with its additional benefits. We had used the product



previously and believed it could be leveraged to a greater extent to exploit its potential if we found the means to communicate it in an interesting way.

### **The cultural insight**

As we started creating this campaign, we built on the needs within our society for people to be appreciated, to be recognised, to be wanted.

### **The channel insight**

We wanted to deliver high impact and the most reach to drive awareness amongst our broad target audience and spark a national conversation, hence traditional mediums such as TV, press, outdoor and online were important. PR and social media also played roles in driving engagement and allowing consumers to interact with the campaign.

### **EXECUTION**

We developed a character that AAMI could use across all communications, 52 weeks of the year and beyond, to

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highlight AAMI's point of difference in the insurance market in a fun and entertaining way.

That character was Rhonda: an awkward but loveable safe driver.

For Australians to warm to Rhonda, she had to be relatable, approachable and certainly not intimidating. There needed to be a little bit of Rhonda in all of us. Launching in September 2011, Rhonda was first introduced to Australians as she was being celebrated by her colleagues, cheered by the masses and applauded on a grand scale for her safe driving. The slightly dorky, but endearing Rhonda was blasted across the country on TV, in press, outdoor, online and social media, and essentially became the face of AAMI's Safe Driver Rewards product.

In March 2012, we then met her again on vacation on the beaches of Bali, bearing her pasty skin, bright red hair and 'beautiful brake foot' for a loveable but somewhat familiar masseuse (all paid for by the savings she made by being an AAMI Safe Driver Rewards customer). However, Australia's love affair with the character reached a pinnacle when we watched our favourite sunburnt redhead flirt with a charming young Balinese resort waiter by the name of Ketut. And with this, a relationship blossomed. Not only between Rhonda and her beau, Ketut, but between Australia and these two lovable characters.

Traditional media again played its role in ensuring the campaign reached its mass audience; however, social media played a vital role in sparking a national conversation about the campaign and sustaining its momentum. This was no more prevalent than the creation of a Facebook page by an unknown fan, named 'The sexual tension between Rhonda & Ketut'. With over 100,000 likes within a week of its creation, it became obvious that Australians were asking for more.

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And hence the love story of Rhonda and Ketut began...

By establishing this odd but intriguing relationship, we now had a property AAMI could use to entertain Australians with, but still serve to them a commercial message. This property came in the form of a narrative, a love story.

But, like any great love story, there must be a tension, something that captivates the audience and keeps them guessing what the next chapter may be. So in August 2013, we took Rhonda back to her high school reunion, where, with Ketut nowhere to be seen, she spots her old high school crush, Trent Toogood. Once again, Rhonda was blasted across the country in various media, but this time in the arms of Trent, not Ketut. Through social media and PR, we invited Australians to be a part of the campaign and by voting 'Who's right for Rhonda' they could ultimately decide what the next chapter of the Rhonda story should be.



**RESULTS**

There’s no denying that Rhonda (with some help from Ketut) has given AAMI, and insurance a personality, a point of difference in an otherwise dull and predictable market.

The creative idea exploded into popular culture and fame. The ‘Rhonda’ campaign idea proved to be so engaging that consumers and press took it up and spread the word – through social media, editorial, PR, etc. The campaign effectively generated unpaid media to create buzz.

It became the subject of analysis on national free to air TV. And in print/online vehicles. Lines from the ads are now part of everyday conversation. Repeated, tweeted,

remixed, Tumblr’d, Facebook’d.

*“Rhonda is mine.”*

*“Hot like a sunrise.”*

*“Beautiful brake foot.”*

*“Kiss me Ketut.”*

Political cartoons, memes and parodies were inspired. T-shirts with lines from the ads started to appear in Bali. They became a No. 1 seller. The independent Facebook tribute dedicated by a fan became an overnight sensation. There was even a greyhound and racehorse named after one of the lines (“Kiss me Ketut.”). Naturally both were winners!

The consumer engagement vs. competitor brands was never more evident than AAMI Facebook likes jumping to 10 times that of our nearest competitor brand and YouTube views being over six times more than our nearest competitor and more than double the category as a whole.

Advertising awareness for ‘Rhonda’ hit a record high. The strength of the campaign meant more people saw and remembered it, recording higher awareness as the campaign progressed (Source: IPSOS Research).

	Pre-Rhonda 2010	Rhonda 2011	Rhonda 2012	Rhonda 2013
Advertising Awareness %	50	50	54	74



**Enquiries for an insurance quote (opportunity calls) grew throughout the campaign to a record high.**

According to IPSOS Research: “Cut-through for ‘Rhonda’ is really strong and is almost double the norm for the level of spend. The link to AAMI is also clear. So overall the ad is working well to leave clear branded memories.”

Brand awareness also grew over time, for both top of mind and total spontaneous awareness for the AAMI brand (IPSOS Research).

	Pre-Rhonda 2012	Rhonda 2013
Top of Mind Awareness %	21	27
Spontaneous Awareness %	54	75

And this was achieved with a virtually unchanged media spend.

In a market where competitors increased spend, as did the category overall, our spend increased by only four percent over the three years, compared to the estimated 20 percent plus media inflation (Source: Starcom).

As a result, the campaign drove consideration for AAMI.

The advertising and the buzz created in social media helped spontaneous consideration increase from only 21 percent before this campaign commenced, to 53 percent after the three years of the campaign (Source: IPSOS Research).

And ultimately, quotes for insurance increased (Source: AAMI).

Enquiries for an insurance quote (opportunity calls) grew throughout the campaign to a record high.



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